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Letter dated 7 October 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to attach herewith the assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Japan in August 2005 (see annex). This assessment has been prepared under my own responsibility following consultations with other members of the Council. I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kenzo **Oshima**
Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 7 October 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Japan (August 2005)

Introduction

Under the presidency of Japan during the month of August 2005, the Security Council undertook an active programme of work. The Council held 7 formal meetings in various formats, 15 consultations and a private meeting of the whole. It adopted three resolutions and four presidential statements. The President also made six statements to the press on behalf of the Council.

Africa

Burundi

On 30 August, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Nureldin Satti, provided an update, in closed consultations, on the situation in Burundi following the election of Pierre Nkurunziza as President of the Republic of Burundi on 19 August 2005.

After the consultations, at a formal meeting, the President made a statement on behalf of the Council (S/PRST/2005/41), in which Council members acknowledged the election of Pierre Nkurunziza as President of the country and called on all parties to respect the will of the Burundian people, the elected Government and the commitments agreed during the transitional process. The members encouraged the new authorities to continue on the present course of stability and national reconciliation and called upon all international partners to remain committed to the process.

Côte d'Ivoire

On 19 August, the Security Council heard a briefing from the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hédi Annabi, in informal consultations, on recent developments in the situation in Côte d'Ivoire. Following the consultations, the President of the Council delivered a statement to the press, in which members of the Council called upon the Ivorian authorities and all parties concerned to end impediments to the freedom of movement of the impartial forces and urged all the parties to show responsibility and restraint so that the upcoming electoral campaign is held in a peaceful atmosphere and as scheduled.

In a private meeting on 31 August, the Minister of Defense of South Africa, Mosiuoa Lekota, representing the African Union Mediation, briefed the Council on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire, Pierre Schori, and the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations, on behalf of the African Union, also gave briefings. At that opportunity, the Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire to the United Nations made a statement before the Council.

Mr. Lekota stated that the South African Mediation would continue its efforts, with the support of the United Nations and the African Union, to ensure the holding of free, fair and transparent elections in Côte d'Ivoire as scheduled, and underlined that it was now time for the implementation in good faith and without delay of the agreements signed by all Ivorian parties. The members of the Council reiterated their readiness to take all steps they considered necessary in order to ensure the respect of the resolutions of the Council and reiterated their full support for the action undertaken by the South African Mediation, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the High Representative for the elections.

A statement to the press was issued after the meeting.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 11 August, the Security Council received a briefing from the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and in particular, on progress in the electoral preparations, including voter registration, and the security situation.

He stressed that the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) should be reinforced and given the mandate to provide logistic support for the elections, as requested by the Secretary-General in his report of 26 May (S/2005/320).

Guinea-Bissau

On 12 August, at the request of a member of the Security Council, the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Tuliameni Kalomoh, briefed the Council, in informal consultations, on the results of the presidential elections in Guinea-Bissau.

On 19 August, the Council issued a presidential statement (S/PRST/2005/39), in which it acknowledged with satisfaction the successful holding of the presidential elections, strongly encouraged all parties to honour their commitments and accept the final ruling of the Supreme Court of Justice, and urged them to refrain from any actions that could jeopardize the efforts towards peace and stability in Guinea-Bissau. The Council also invited the Secretary-General to present recommendations in his next report regarding the updating of the mandate and role of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau.

Sierra Leone

On 10 August, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sierra Leone, Victor da Silva Angelo, gave a briefing concerning the continuation of a United Nations presence in Sierra Leone and the provision of security for the Special Court there following the withdrawal of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, which is scheduled to take place at the end of December 2005.

After further discussions among the members, on 31 August the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1620 (2005), by which it requested the Secretary-General to establish the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL) for an initial period of 12 months beginning on 1 January 2006, to be headed by an Executive Representative of the Secretary-General. The Council also requested the Secretary-General to continue planning for security for the Special

Court for Sierra Leone and stated that it looked forward to further details on the proposed arrangements.

Sudan

On 2 August, following the report of the death in a helicopter crash of the First Vice President of the Sudan, John Garang de Mabior, the Security Council received a briefing, in closed consultations, from the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, on the situation in the Sudan. In that meeting, all members of the Council expressed their condolences to the family of Mr. Garang and to the people and Government of the Sudan.

After the consultations, at a formal meeting of the Council, the President issued a statement on behalf of the Council (S/PRST/2005/38), in which it expressed its profound regret over the death of Mr. Garang and called on all Sudanese to honour his memory by restoring peace and calm throughout the country.

On 30 August, at the request of a member of the Council, the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hédi Annabi, provided a briefing in informal consultations concerning the status of the peace talks on Darfur in Abuja, Nigeria.

The President of the Council delivered a press statement after the meeting, in which the members of the Council thanked the African Union for mediating the peace talks in Abuja between the parties to the Darfur conflict. The members of the Council also strongly urged the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army, the Justice and Equality Movement and the Government of the Sudan to return to the talks in Abuja on 15 September and to negotiate constructively and urgently to secure an early agreement.

Asia

Afghanistan

On 23 August, the Security Council held an open debate with the participation of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), Jean Arnault, representatives of Afghanistan and 10 other non-members of the Council.

At the opening of the meeting, the Council heard a briefing from Mr. Arnault on the situation on the ground and the progress in the preparations for the elections. The electoral campaign, which had just begun, was governed by the Electoral Law and Regulations from the Joint Electoral Management Body and monitored by international observers. In outlining the final preparations for the election, Mr. Arnault noted that there was a shortage of funding, mainly due to an increase in polling and counting costs, and appealed to the international community to make urgent efforts to fill the funding gap.

Mr. Arnault also indicated concerns regarding the deterioration of the security situation in recent months, especially in the southern, eastern, and south-eastern parts of the country. He stressed that security was the top priority for the Government and its people and that the strengthening of key State institutions, such

as the police, the judiciary, and the civilian administration, and the elimination of the narcotics industry also remained crucial.

Based on his briefing, the Council welcomed the progress in the preparations for the elections, expressed concern over the increased attacks by the Taliban, Al-Qaida and other extremist groups, and condemned attempts to disrupt the political process by terrorist acts or other forms of violence. It also expressed its strong view that the international community must maintain a high level of commitment to assist Afghanistan in addressing its remaining challenges, including the security situation, the disbandment of illegal armed groups, the elimination of the production and trafficking of drugs, and the development of government institutions, and welcomed the desire of the international community and the Government of Afghanistan to agree on a new framework for international engagement beyond the completion of the Bonn political process.

A presidential statement was agreed upon and was read out at the conclusion of the debate (S/PRST/2005/40).

Timor-Leste

On 29 August, the Security Council heard a briefing from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL), Sukehiro Hasegawa, on the report of the Secretary-General, concerning recent political and security developments in the country and the implementation of the mandate of UNOTIL (S/2005/533).

In fulfilling its mandate to assist Timor-Leste in strengthening domestic governance, the capacity of its State institutions and public administration, and its legal and rule of law framework, including the national police and its Border Patrol Unit, UNOTIL has made substantial progress. As for the serious crimes process, UNOTIL had produced a copy of all records compiled by the Serious Crimes Unit, which would be shipped to United Nations Headquarters for safe archiving when the agreement between UNOTIL and Timor-Leste was reached.

The members of the Council welcomed the fact that the overall situation remained calm and stable and that relations with neighbouring countries were continuing to improve and commended the efforts by Mr. Hasegawa and UNOTIL to fulfil the mandate in all its aspects. The members expressed their willingness to consider, in due time, updated reports on the planning for a smooth transition towards a sustainable development assistance framework by the end of the mandate of UNOTIL in May 2006.

Middle East

On 24 August, the Security Council heard an open briefing on the situation in the Middle East by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs following the start of the Israeli disengagement from Gaza and parts of the northern West Bank.

The operation had proceeded relatively smoothly and with surprising speed owing to the cooperation and restraint generally observed by both sides. However, real and difficult challenges still lie ahead in forging common ground between Israelis and Palestinians as peace partners. As for Lebanon, several important

developments had occurred, including the formal establishment of the new Government following a parliamentary vote of confidence.

In the informal consultations that followed, the members of the Council commended the ongoing implementation of this process and the assistance of the Quartet Special Envoy for Disengagement, James Wolfensohn. They appreciated the coordination between the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority before and during the disengagement and called for further cooperation between the two sides in the forthcoming period. The Council members also underlined the importance of full and complete disengagement in a manner consistent with the road map and reiterated their call upon both parties to ensure continued progress in the full implementation of the road map and relevant resolutions towards the creation of an independent, viable, democratic and sovereign State of Palestine, existing side by side with Israel in peace and security.

A press statement was agreed upon and read out after the meeting.

Iraq/United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq

On 9 August, the Security Council heard a briefing from the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs on the activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) over the preceding year and the recent situation in Iraq. In the discussions based on the briefing, the members of the Council expressed appreciation for the Mission's activities and expressed strong support for Iraq's efforts to complete the drafting of the constitution by 15 August 2005, the timeline set out in resolution 1546 (2004). They also stressed that UNAMI had an important role to play in assisting the referendum scheduled for October and the national elections in December 2005, and that national reconciliation and inclusiveness with regard to all parties in Iraq in the political process was crucial for a successful transition.

The Council considered the draft resolution prepared by the United States of America, which recommended the extension of the UNAMI mandate for 12 months.

On 11 August, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1619 (2005), by which it extended the mandate of UNAMI for another 12 months, and expressed the intention to review the mandate of the Mission within 12 months or sooner, if requested by the Government of Iraq.

Iraq/Kuwait

On 25 August, the Security Council heard a briefing from the Secretary-General's High-Level Coordinator, Ambassador Yuli Vorontsov, on the report of the Secretary-General concerning the repatriation and return of Kuwaiti and other nationals detained by the Iraqi regime in the 1990s (S/2005/513).

The members of the Council expressed their full support for Ambassador Vorontsov's work. They strongly condemned the execution of Kuwaiti and third country nationals by the previous Iraqi regime and expressed condolences to the families of missing persons. They also welcomed the constructive engagement of the present Government of Iraq.

A press statement was agreed upon and read out after the consultations.

Lebanon

On 25 August, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, briefed the Security Council in informal consultations on the investigation of the International Independent Investigation Commission into the killing of former Prime Minister of Lebanon, Rafic Hariri, in February 2005.

After the briefing, the members of the Council noted with satisfaction that the Commission had made significant progress in its investigation and reiterated their full support to the Commission in its efforts to help identify those responsible for the crime. The members also reiterated their call on all States and all parties, especially those who had yet to respond adequately, to cooperate fully in order to expedite the work of the Commission.

Following the consultations, the President of the Council read out a statement to the press.

On 30 August, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs provided another update on the work of the International Independent Investigation Commission, including information on the detention of four suspects that had taken place that day.

After the consultations, the President summarized the discussion for the press stating that the Council members had thanked the Under-Secretary-General for his timely briefing and had taken note of the information provided on the detention by the Government of Lebanon of the aforementioned four individuals, that Council members had welcomed the progress in the investigation and had expressed the hope that the final report would fully establish the facts and provide solid evidence in support of the findings, and that Council members had also reiterated their call upon the international community to fully cooperate in the work of the Commission.

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

On 4 August, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1618 (2005), by which it condemned without reservation and in the strongest terms the terrorist attacks that had taken place in Iraq and affirmed that acts of terrorism must not be allowed to disrupt the political and economic transition currently taking place in Iraq, including the constitutional drafting process and its referendum outlined in resolution 1546 (2004). The representative of Iraq was invited to the meeting and underscored the importance of a coherent policy towards terrorism.

On 15 August, the President of the Council issued a press statement on the assassination of the Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka, Lakshman Kadirgamar, on 12 August. In a press statement, the members of the Council strongly condemned the senseless act of terrorism and called on the parties concerned to implement fully the provisions of the ceasefire agreement.